

BERGEN KUNSTHALL

EMILY WARDILL

MATT BLACK AND RAT

20 JANUARY – 26 MARCH 2017

Matt Black and Rat is Emily Wardill's first solo exhibition in a public institution in Norway and her first large-scale solo show for five years. It includes two new film works, a 16mm projection and a new series of sculptural reliefs and framed rayograms.

Wardill's work explores the opacity of communication and the way in which language, images and materials embody and transmit ideas and meaning. Through film, sound, sculpture and printmaking, she emphasizes the irreducible strangeness of images and objects, encouraging and enabling states of fluidity, transition and transgression as language transforms into image or matter, and objects attain the lyrical and slippery cadence of speech.

For this exhibition, Bergen Kunsthall has commissioned a major new film work, *No Trace of Accelerator* (2017), which is shown here for the first time. The film takes as its starting point the mysterious incident of a series of apparently spontaneous fires that broke out in an isolated French town, Moirans-en-Montagne, in the mid-1990s. The cause of the fires remained unexplained for some months, a period when all kinds of fear, panic and superstition gripped the small community. The fires were eventually explained, but the reaction of the towns-people became the subject of a case study into the social amplification of risk, written by anthropologists Marc Poumadere and Claire Mays.

Drawing on her own research into the events – as well as the structure and psychology of fairytales and horror stories – Wardill uses the figure of fire to explore the physical, psychological and narrative implications of trying to 'model' entities, energies or objects that are in constant flux. Filmed on a series of constructed, stylised sets, with a small cast of archetypal characters loosely based on the real protagonists, the performers employ techniques of intuition and improvisation. Working under the titles A, B and C, the actors assume the roles of 'The Nephew' – who it transpires set the fires – 'Annie', his aunt who died in a blaze, and 'The Fireman', who

also died whilst attempting to rescue her. Footage from media reports at the time is intercut with the narrative, and passages from the court documents and case study are also incorporated. At the same time, Wardill introduces the idea of fire as a chaotic and unpredictable object – a metaphor for various conditions of fear, instability, fantasy and horror.

Also included in the exhibition is another new film, *I gave my love a cherry that had no stone* (2016). Shot within the interior of the Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, the work assumes an almost sculptural quality – through both its filmic construction and its physical installation. Space, matter and human presence or agency is uncannily confused as the camera glides through the modernist interior, haunting and 'performing' it in a kind of ghostly duet with the solitary and ethereal protagonist. Wardill has spoken of the surrealist painter Dorothea Tanning's work, *Some Roses and their Phantoms* (1952) as a starting point for the film: 'She depicts a tablecloth, creased with folds, and "roses" that sit on it. But they don't look like roses; instead they are crystalline, crumpled-up, impossible brown geometric riddles. Something like origami or a crashed car... It is both of nature and the supernatural, and for me it feels both contemporary and past.'

In Gallery 4 Wardill presents a 16mm film, *The Palace* (2014), which explores the idea of the 'memory palace' – a technique employed to aid memory by visualising information, scenarios and knowledge, using the mental recollection of familiar architectural spaces. In the work the camera is moving ceaselessly, restlessly exploring an ambiguous space whose surfaces are in constant flux. Meanwhile the narrator of the film introduces the idea of monochromancy, a condition in which only one type of cone cell is stimulated in colour vision, leading to a kind of 'colour-blindness', which also threatens our ability to understand space.

Alongside the film works, Wardill also shows a new group of sculptural reliefs, installed very specifically

within the Kunsthall's white cube spaces. These reliefs draw on the motif of a freshly unpacked man's shirt, with its folds still visible, apparently emerging from the architecture of the space itself. Rayographs are also included, based on the credits for a previous film. Both the shirts – which refer to origami – and the rayograms – which refer to concrete poetry – express the desire of one form to become another; flat paper to become three dimensional and words to become images.

The exhibition has been conceived as an holistic experience – responding to, and drawing in, the architecture of Bergen Kunsthall – with the various works infecting and inflecting each other; bleeding through the galleries to create an unsettling, disorienting, but highly charged, immersive experience.

Emily Wardill (b. 1977, UK) lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal.

The exhibition will travel to Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, in summer 2017. A publication accompanying the show will be available from June 2017.

On the occasion of the exhibition Wardill has produced a special limited edition work, *Concrete Roses*, (2017) available from Bergen Kunsthall in an edition of 10 unique rayograms.

Upstairs:

Reading area with books and research material related to our current exhibitions. The selection includes books and articles selected by Emily Wardill especially for the exhibition.

Edition:**Emily Wardill****Concrete Roses, 2017**

Rayogram. All unique.

40,5 × 50,5 cm,

10 + 2 APs

NOK 5000,-

Publication:

A new publication accompanying the exhibition will be available from June 2017.

Tours:

Every Sunday at 2pm

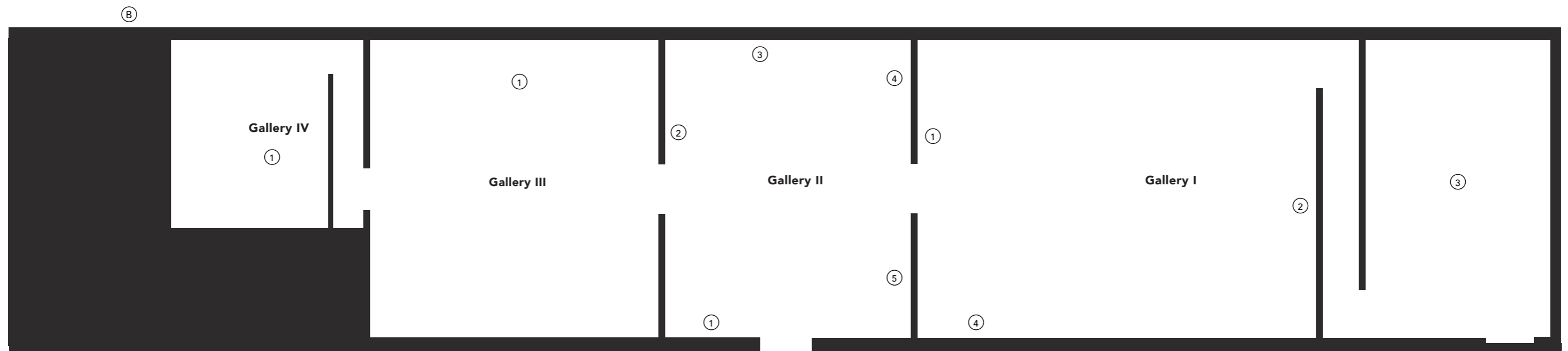
22 January at 1pm for Families

Plattform:**Saturday 21 January at 2pm**

Emily Wardill in conversation with Martin Clark

Thursday 16 February at 7pm

Kirsty Bell on Emily Wardill



SAL I

- 1 Emily Wardill
Crimp, 2017
Resin Cast Relief
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

- 2 Emily Wardill
Jet Plane, 2017
Resin Cast Relief
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

- 3 Emily Wardill
No Trace of Accelerator, 2017
HD video with sound. 48 min. Commissioned by Bergen Kunsthall and Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, with funds from Arts Council Norway. Courtesy the artist.

- 4 Emily Wardill
Noh Costume, 2017
Resin Cast Relief
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

SAL II

- 1 Emily Wardill
An Easy Swan, 2017
Resin Cast Relief
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

- 2 Emily Wardill
Credits 11, 2013
Rayogramm. 170 x 96 cm. Unikat
Courtesy the artist and carlier I gebauer , Berlin

- 3 Emily Wardill
Credits 3, 2013
Rayogramm. 170 x 96 cm. Unikat
Courtesy the artist and carlier I gebauer , Berlin

- 4 Emily Wardill
House, 2017
Resin Cast Relief
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

- 5 Emily Wardill
Credits 9, 2013
Rayogramm. 170 x 96 cm. Unikat
Courtesy the artist and carlier I gebauer, Berlin

SAL III

- 1 Emily Wardill
I gave my love a cherry that had no stone, 2016
HD video with sound. 8 min. A production of the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève for the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement 2016, with the support of the Fonds d'Art Contemporain de la Ville (FMAC) and the Fonds d'Art Contemporain du Canton de Genève (FCAC), Faena Art, In Between Art Film and HEAD — Genève. Courtesy the artist.

SAL IV

- 1 Emily Wardill
The Palace, 2014,
16 mm, b/w film, optical sound, 7.22 min
Courtesy the artist, carlier I gebauer, Berlin, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, and Altman Siegel, San Francisco

BILLBOARD

- B Billboard 213 x 309 cm